

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Section 4, Pages 91 - 120

This correspondence documents the research Robert Taft undertook in writing his works on the history of American photography. It includes letters he wrote and responses. Correspondents include staff in historical and other collecting institutions, family members of early photographers and expedition members, publishers, and other people researching early U. S. photographers. It also documents some preservation work he did on early photographs. See Taft's photography research notes as Kansas Memory unit 228066.

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Date: 1926-1955

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Robert Taft photography correspondence

FREDERICK S. DELLENBAUGH
ONE WEST SIXTY SEVENTH STREET
NEW YORK

Jan. 23rd, 1933

My dear Prof. Taft;

I think I wrote you that I was laid up for a brief time with grip; to let you know why my communications ceased.

I have just unearthed a large print of J.K. Hillers in the field with all his paraphernalia which I send you herewith instead of a stereographic size.

If you wish to mount it for your reproduction I have no objection. Kindly return when you are finished with it.

Hillers did not ordinarily wear a beard. The mule on the left is Nigger, so named because he was all white! The other I do not remember or rather I cannot identify as we had several that were much alike, but Nigger was different in many ways besides his color. Sometimes he was a demon when one tried to catch him in the morning.

We never "roped" the animals as the Mexicans do because then you have a flock of wild goats to deal with. They enjoy the game, Catch me if you can!

You see the dark box in the middle. We called it the blind box. It was similar to the one used by Beaman in the 1871 work.

One of the boxes on the ground was for the camera and the other for extra plates and plateholders. You see a battered canteen at the foot of the tripod. The place was probably near a spring or brook but often Hillers worked miles from water. *The bottle has the silver solution, I think.*

Later he developed a dark tent which was made of three thicknesses of cloth-yellow, black, and red, which were sewn in such a way that they could be dropped over the tripod and made tight on the ground. An opening on one side enabled the operator to enter on his knees and fold behind him a sufficient amount of the cloth to cut out the light. This proved very successful and was lighter to transport.

In travelling by pack train or by boat extra weight was reduced in every possible way-especially with us who were at that time so far from any supply station.

What a boon the film is now in travelling.

Nigger has the pack saddle on for the photo.outfit while the other mule has Hillers's riding saddle.

Judging from the aspens the scene is at a high altitude but I cannot tell where.

Sincerely yours,

I will forward the other photographs to you soon.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Jan. 24, 1933

Mr. Peter Neff
1365 Maryland Ave., S.W.
Canton, Ohio

Dear Mr. Neff:

Dr. Howard Jones of Circleville, Ohio, has suggested that I write you for information concerning your father. I am collecting material for a history of the tintype, an early American form of photograph, which you, of course, know. I wish the history to be as authentic as possible, and for that reason I wish to base it on original material as far as possible.

The first patent taken out on the tintype process was obtained by Hamilton L. Smith of Gambier, Ohio, on Feb. 19, 1856, (U.S. Patent #14,300) and was assigned to William Neff and Peter Neff, Jr. I have been able to procure considerable information from Dr. Jones concerning Smith, and am hoping that you will be kind enough to help with information concerning your father.

I have two biographical sketches of your father which furnish me some information, but it is not, of course, original manuscript material. Do you know if your father kept a diary, especially during the period 1850-60, when the original work on tintypes was begun? If not, do you have letters, note books, early newspaper articles bearing on this original work? One of the sketches of your father's life states that he sold out his interests in Smith's patent in 1859. Do you know to whom the interests were sold? This same sketch states that your father wrote "a pamphlet and a booklet describing the process" in the fifties. Do you know if any of these are still in existence?

I am especially desirous of obtaining original manuscript material of Smith and your father, as there is another claimant for the honor of originating the tintype, A. V. M. Griswold of Lancaster, Ohio.

Any information that you can give me will be very highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT:AW



Robert Taft photography correspondence

THISTLE  PRINTS

Detroit Publishing Co.

ESTABLISHED 1897
1244 WASHINGTON BLVD.
PHONE CAD 0223
Detroit, Mich., U. S. A.

SCHOOL AND LIBRARY
DECORATIONS
"PHOSTINT" JOURNEYS
VIEWS OF TRAVEL
LANTERN SLIDES

MAIN OFFICE
DETROIT
CABLE ADDRESS
"THISTLE"

January 24, 1933.

Mr. Robert Taft,
Associate Professor of Chemistry,
University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kans.

Dear Mr. Taft:-

In reference to the Camera and negatives which were taken by Mr. Jackson in the '70's, we wish to say that we will sell the negatives at the rate of \$1.00 each and as to the Camera, which is still in use at our studio, we will sell this for \$10.00.

We wish to say that the Camera in question is not in the same shape as it has been when Mr. Jackson used it. Additions were rebuilt to this Camera so that we could use it in our studio. However, the framework of the old Camera is still there. If you can use this Camera in this shape we will be glad to hear from you.

The prices quoted, you no doubt realize, are very reasonable. If we have to buy another Camera to take the place of this one it will cost us by far a greater sum than quoted you. Also the negatives can not be duplicated, and if they could be, they would cost by far more than \$1.00 each.

Trusting that you will find this satisfactory and that we may be favored with your order for this material, we are

Yours very truly,

Detroit Publishing Company.

F.J. Carnack/E

F.J. Carnack

SOLE PUBLISHERS "THISTLE" PRINTS STANDARD THROUGHOUT THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD FOR MORE THAN THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Jan. 24, 1933

Mr. E. L. Yonge
Map Curator, American Geographical Society
Broadway at 156 St.
New York City

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your letter of Jan. 16 concerning photographs of early Western Surveys. The information was exactly what I wanted to find out.

I have written the Geological Survey concerning these and other photographs; some they have, and many they do not have. Most of the early surveys were sent out by the War Department before the organization of the Geological Survey, and from many causes, losses by fire, losses by transfer, etc., photographs of these surveys are lacking in whole or in part. I have been able to obtain a number of the Jackson photographs of the Hayden Surveys, and have recently located a set of the O'Sullivan photographs on the 40th parallel survey in the office of Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army. I have hopes of procuring these for purposes of photographic copying from Washington.

I should like to ask about the third and fourth items tabulated in your letter, i.e., the Wheeler Survey and the untitled portfolio. I am not interested in obtaining a complete set of the Wheeler photographs, but would like to get half a dozen or so representative ones which could well include photographs of personnel, of now familiar landmarks, of possible incidents of historic importance, etc. Are the individual photographs in this portfolio detachable? If so, could you select a half dozen or so from the portfolio to send me?

With regard to the fourth item, the untitled portfolio, I should like to ask how many there are in this collection. I have been trying to obtain some of the Watkins pictures, and, if it is not too much trouble, should like to borrow this portfolio.

We will, of course, stand the expense of packing and transportation and would feel deeply indebted to you for your time and trouble in aiding me.

You understand, of course, that these are being borrowed for the purpose of photographic copying, with the possibility that some of them would eventually be published. Acknowledgement to the American Geographical Society would be cheerfully given.

If you do not care to lend the photographs described above to me personally, I shall be glad to ask our University library to request them. They have done so on a number of previous occasions.

Again thanking you for your valued services, I am
Yours sincerely,

RT:AW



Robert Taft photography correspondence

1365 MARYLAND AVENUE, S. W.
CANTON, OHIO

January 26, 1933

Mr Robert Taft-
University of Kansas
Lawrence -

Dear Mr Taft-

It is my sad duty to inform you my
beloved husband Pelin Taft passed away
almost three years ago today after a few days
illness. His older sister, Victor years older
than he has always been the record keeper
of the family. Now she is quite feeble
both in body and mind, she lives with
my older step-daughter, but I will see her
next Sunday as it is my custom to take
Sunday dinner there, and will give her
your letter, perhaps she can give you

Robert Taft photography correspondence

some information— Mr. Taft senior
and Hamilton Smith did not call their
invention a tintype but Melainotype
which immediately followed or succeeded
the old Daguerreotype. The plates were
made of iron the sheets were imported
and called, I think Jagger iron — Mr. Taft
was awarded a bronze medal by the New
York American Institute New York
1856—

Hamilton Smith's wife was my
aunt and both of them were very dear
to us their nephews and nieces—

Their daughter-in-law Mrs A. B. Smith
lived with one of her daughters Mrs
Richard Storren. East Aurora New York

Robert Taft photography correspondence

She or her daughter may be able to
give you some information. Dr. Howard
Jones has not.

Please excuse my penmanship as my
Montain pen is out of commission
and this one will go!

Sincerely yours

Wilm B. Neff.



Robert Taft photography correspondence

ADDRESS ONLY
THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

603 FT

LETTER No. D-11979/33

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
WASHINGTON

January 27, 1933.

Mr. Robert Taft,
Department of Chemistry,
The University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas.

Sir:

The patent of Hamilton L. Smith bearing No. 14,300,
referred to in your letter of January 24, was granted
February 19, 1856 upon an application executed November 30,
1855 and filed in this office on December 5, 1855.

Your inquiry concerning a former application of
Mr. Smith will be referred to another division of the
office.

Very respectfully,

J. A. Bearley,
Chief Clerk.
per *W. H. S.*

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Jan. 28, 1933

The Director
American Museum of Natural History
New York City

Dear Sir:

Mr. McClenahan, director of the Franklin Institute, has suggested that I write you concerning some photographs in which I am interested.

I am collecting material for a manuscript, "The Early Use of Photography in the Explorations of the West," and am particularly desirous of locating daguerreotypes taken by S. N. Carvalho of General Fremont's fifth expedition in 1853-54. Mr. Carvalho was for a number of years a resident of New York City. Carvalho's daguerreotypes were copied photographically by Brady of New York in the winter of 1855-56. Do you have any of Carvalho's daguerreotypes or of Brady's copies of these daguerreotypes?

In addition to the photographs mentioned above, I am attempting to locate possible sources of photographs taken on the following expeditions:

Expedition	Date	Photographer	Type of Work
Upper Missouri	1853	Stanley	Daguerreotype
Simpson	1859	C. C. Mills	" (?)
Raynolds	1859-60	Hutton	Wet Plate
Ives	1859	Ives	" (?)
King	1867	T. H. O'Sullivan	"
Wheeler	1869	William Bell	"
Wheeler	1871	T. H. O'Sullivan	"
Custer Black Hills	1875	Illingworth	"

Are copies of any of the above photographs in your files?

Any help that you can give me will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT:AW

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Jan. 28, 1933

The Librarian
Brown University
Providence, R. I.

Dear Sir:

Mr. F. H. Meserve of New York City has told me that you possess a collection of photographs of the Civil War period. If possible, I should like to obtain the following information concerning your collection:

1. What is the nature of your collection? By nature, I mean the types of photographs you have. Are they portraits, pictures of incidents or places, or all three? How many photographs are included in your collection? What time period do the photographs in your collection cover? i.e., 1870-70, etc.

2. Do you know of other collections of historic photographs? If so, can you tell me where they are located? I have seen photographs marked "from the MacDonald Collection," and "from the Sutton Collection," but have not been able as yet to find the possessor of these collections.

3. What have been the most frequently occurring sources of your collection? I am endeavoring to start a small collection here at the University of Kansas with two objects in mind: (a) a collection of historic photographic materials, i.e., examples of daguerreotypes, tintypes, ambrotypes, collotypes, etc.; and (b) a collection of historic photographs of the West. Any information as to the sources of such material would be gratefully received.

4. As stated above, we are beginning a collection of photographs at the University of Kansas. Can you give me advice on the proper methods of cataloguing and preserving such a collection? Do you have such photographs on continuous exhibition? If so, do you have any particular way of exhibiting them; i.e., what protection from handling is made?

If the Brown collection is not in your custody, will you please see that this letter gets to the proper person? Any information which you can give me will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT:AW

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Jan. 28, 1933

Dr. Howard Jones
Circleville
Ohio

Dear Dr. Jones:

Thank you for your letter of Jan. 20 concerning Professor Smith and for his photograph, which has also been received. I am having the photograph copied, and, as soon as this is done, I will return it to you.

Your letter has raised another question or two that I should like to ask you. I do not think it likely that any work was done on the tintype as we know it now before 1850. In the tintype the japanned surface of the iron was coated with iodized collodion, and collodion was not discovered by Schoenboin until 1846. It was not introduced into photographic practice until several years after this. I am not disputing your work, of course, because undoubtedly Professor Smith was experimenting with photography before 1846, as your letter states. I am inclined to think, however, that his experiments were on a modification of the original daguerreotypes. It is unfortunate that the early pictures of your mother have disappeared, as this would tell us something about the type of his early experiments. Are there other members of your mother's family who possibly might possess them?

Your letter also states that Professor Smith went from Cleveland to Kenyon. In what work was Professor Smith engaged while at Cleveland?

Can you tell me when the photograph of Professor Smith was taken? I judge from what you have already told me that the platinum paper was some that Professor Smith himself prepared.

I shall appreciate your continued aid in furnishing me this information.

Yours truly,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT:AW



Robert Taft photography correspondence

Div F/raz

603

LETTER No.

118437

ADDRESS ONLY
THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

WASHINGTON

January 29, 1935.

Robert Taft,
Assoc. Professor of Chemistry,
The University of Kansas,
Dept. of Chemistry,
Lawrence, Kansas.

Sir:

Copies of ten of the patents referred to in your letter of January 3rd, were mailed to you on January 16th, at a cost of \$1.00.

The records show patents No. 11,213, 11,266 and 11,267 were issued to James A. Cutting on July 4, 1854, and July 11, 1854, respectively.

Printed copies of the above patents may be obtained at a cost of 10¢ per copy, if desired.

Respectfully,

J. A. Bearley
Chief Clerk.

POSTAGE STAMPS
are not receivable as fees.
If you send them,
they will be returned.



Robert Taft photography correspondence

HOWARD JONES, M. D.
CIRCLEVILLE, O.

February, 1, 33.

Prof. Robert Taft,
Department of Chemistry,
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas.

My dear Sir:-

Your letter of January 28th has just come to me as per enclosed slip.

The collodion question I can not settle. The article on Peter Neff was probably written by some member of the family whose information was "hearsay". It is true Professor Smith experimented on improvements in taking daguerreotypes and this probably led to the tin-type.

Professor Smith was always interested in Physics. He made reflecting telescopes and lenses for microscopes when at Yale --in college-- and his brother Robertson when a Junior at Yale made a large reflecting telescope which Yale College purchased.

In 1848, Professor H.L. Smith published a book called "The World". It contains many excellent wood-cuts, his own drawing and some were engraved by his brother Henry.

Professor Smith after leaving College was in the produce business in Cleveland with my father for a time. The business failed and later, just how long, I do not know, he went to Kenyon. This information could be obtained from Rev. Pierce, President of Kenyon, Gambier, Ohio.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

HOWARD JONES, M. D.
CIRCLEVILLE, O.

possibly much longer

The exact year the photograph you have was taken I cannot state. It was after I left Hobart College, after 1875, probably three or four years. As he sold the process there may be a patent on it. In conversation with him he told me his greatest difficulty was getting suitable paper. Mrs. Buttles Smith, East Aurora, New York, can tell of this, I think she was in Geneva at this period.

I have some daguerreotypes of my mother and her sisters (all the family are now dead) which I believe Professor Smith took. My mother told me of the long time of exposure and I think she told me of his making the plates and silvering them, and how he iodized them by holding over a dish of heated iodine crystals, etc., etc..

In my early experiments in micro-photography the sensitized collodion plates showed too granular under high powers. I think I used whites of eggs later mixed with something else then immersed in the silver bath. However, I have long forgotten the details.

In my boyhood I heard much about Photography, Optics, Physics, etc., and on only one certain point is my memory to be trusted. My mother was married in 1846, and Professor Smith's experiments in photography were before this date. This is sure.

Any further aid I can give you I shall be pleased to do.

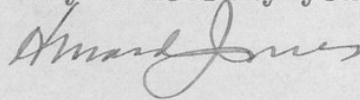
Professor Smith had five brothers and five sisters, every one of whom had some unusual

Robert Taft photography correspondence

HOWARD JONES, M. D.
CIRCLEVILLE, O.

talent. You will find my mother's biography
in "Who's Who" for 1899-1900.

Very sincerely yours,



Howard Jones, M.D.

H.J./AMC.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

FREDERICK S. DELLENBAUGH
ONE WEST SIXTY-SEVENTH STREET
NEW YORK

Feb. 7th, 1933

Dear Prof. Taft;-

There is no hurry about returning the photographs. I would, however, like to have them before the first of June when I usually change my daily residence from the city to my mountain "fastness", at Cragmoor, N.Y. From my house there I could almost wave a signal flag to you! *1900 ft. above sea level.*

The photograph in the background of your portrait certainly was a strong argument in your favor for I have discovered in my long life that that kind of a man has stability.

If I find other photographs in my collection that I think you might be interested in I will inform you. Of course you have all the U.S.G.S. ones taken by Jack Hillers.

I have one by Illingworth of Custer sitting behind a grizzly he shot. This is reproduced in my little life of Custer, p. 162, and as the University library doubtless has the volume you could photograph from that.

Mrs Custer identified the persons in it. You asked about Mrs Custer. Her name is in the telephone book and some time ago I dropped a line to her suggesting an hour for me to call, but evidently she is away-probably down in Florida. Or she may be ill. I shall no doubt hear from her later on, and will let you know where to address her. If she died I have not heard of it, but it may have occurred recently.

Sincerely yours,

Frederick S. Dellenbaugh.



Robert Taft photography correspondence

Feb. 8, 1933

Miss Stella Drum, Librarian
Missouri Historical Society
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Madam:

I am endeavoring to trace a collection of daguerreotypes taken by R. H. Vance in California in 1850. The last record that I can find of them is that they were purchased (300 of them) by J. H. Fitzgibbon of St. Louis in 1853 for purposes of exhibition. Mr. Fitzgibbon was, as you probably know, a prominent early-day photographer in St. Louis. According to my records, he worked in St. Louis until the '70's, if not later. I thought perhaps that these daguerreotypes might have come into your possession.

I should like to ask also if your Society has an extensive collection of early photographs (including daguerreotypes and tintypes). If so, could you give me some idea of the magnitude and nature of your collection? We are starting a collection of photographs here at the University of Kansas dealing with the development of the West, and wish to know if similar collections are being made elsewhere. Photographs of individuals, of places, and of incidents are to be included in our collection.

Might I also ask what ruling your Society makes with regard to copying (i.e., photographing) material in your collection? Can such material be obtained through inter-library loans, or must it be photographed in your museum?

Any information that you can give me will be highly appreciated.

Yours truly,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT/w

Robert Taft photography correspondence

ADDRESS ONLY
THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

668

LETTER No. 11979

LEH

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1933.

Mr. Robert Taft,
Department of Chemistry,
University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas.

My dear Mr. Taft:

Referring further to your letter of January 24, 1933, you are advised that the office can give you no information concerning the former application referred to in Smith patent No. 14,300. Two volumes of records of about this time were destroyed in the Patent Office fire of 1877.

If the application referred to resulted in patent you may be able to obtain information concerning it by consulting the Patent Office Indexes in some public library. Abandoned applications on file for more than twenty years are destroyed.

In regard to the term of patent No. 14,300, you are informed that patents prior to 1861 were issued for fourteen year periods.

Yours very truly,

J. C. Brearley
Chief Clerk.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Feb. 11, 1933

Mr. Frederick S. Dellenbaugh
1 W. 67th St.
New York City

Dear Mr. Dellenbaugh:

We will have your photographs returned to you long before your return to Cragmoor. You are very kind in sending them to us and permitting us so much time to make our records.

Might I bother you to send the Illingsworth one of Custer and the grizzly? Our library does not have your life of Custer, but I will ask our librarian to obtain a copy of it. I remember a description of the picture from one of Custer's letters that Mrs. Custer published in one of her books, Boots and Saddles, I believe.

With regard to Hillers' pictures, I have those, of course, that appeared in your books. Do you have the original photographs? We can, of course, copy the half-tones in the books, but we would prefer to copy directly from the originals, if possible. By the time they have been copied several times some of the original detail is lost. We were able to obtain a very excellent copy of your picture of Hillers and will return it to you shortly.

I should like also to procure one of Hillers' pictures that shows you quite distinctly. Do you have any such photograph? If you do not have any of this period, a later one will do.

I have in mind the use of material for two books, Old Photographs, a popular history of photography for the layman from 1840-1880, and a second, Early Photographs of the West. Do you think they would be of sufficient general interest to warrant publication? They certainly are to me, and seem to be with everyone to whom I have talked. I have been carrying on an extensive correspondence concerning these matters with a number of individuals, most of whom have been very generous with their aid---you and Mr. W. H. Jackson particularly so.

Thank you, too, for your help in procuring Mrs. Custer's interest.

Yours truly,

Robert Taft

RT/w

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Feb. 11, 1933

The American Institute
60 E. 42nd St.
New York City

Gentlemen:

I am collecting material for a history of the tintype, an early and popular type of American photograph. In my search for material I have found that Peter Neff, one of the men associated with the early history of the tintype, was awarded a bronze medal for the best malanotype (an early name for the tintype) by the American Institute in 1856.

I am writing to inquire if your organization is the American Institute which made the award to Neff. If so, are there records of this award in the files of your Institute? Is the malanotype upon which the award was based still in the possession of your organization? If so, would it be possible to obtain a photographic copy of it, at our expense?

If you do not happen to be the American Institute concerned, can you give me the address of the proper one to which I may write for the desired information.

Any aid that you can give me will be highly appreciated.

Yours truly,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT/w

Robert Taft photography correspondence

KENYON COLLEGE
GAMBIER, OHIO

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS
E. H. JOHNSON
C. L. COTTRELL

Feb. 15, 1933

Dr. Robert Taft,
University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas.

Dear Dr. Taft:

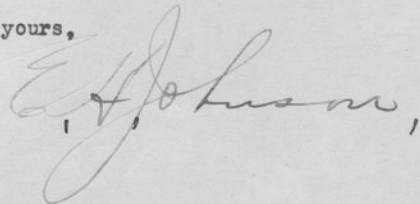
I am inclosing a small copy of a portrait which hangs in the Kenyon College Library, and said to be that of Hamilton L. Smith.

There does not seem to be much information obtainable here concerning Professor Smith, and although I have spent some time in searching, I have not been able to learn anything so far along the lines in which you are interested. A letter to the following address should bring you full information concerning the Neff family.

Mrs. Peter Neff,
1365 Maryland, S. W.,
Canton, Ohio.

If I find anything that seems helpful, I will send it on to you. Also, I shall be pleased to know of the success of your own investigations, and especially of the end result in your writing of a history of photography.

Very sincerely yours,



Robert Taft photography correspondence

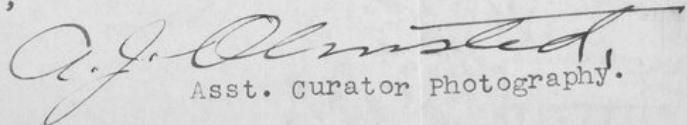
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Prof. Robert Taft, Dept. of Chemistry 2-16-33
The University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kans.

Dear Sir;

The earliest dated tintypes taken by Neff are 1854, some of them are good enough to photograph. We have the tintype that was with the application of Smith for patent 1855 but it is in very poor shape I have just cleaned it and covered it with glass. This is the only one that may have been taken by Smith. We will be glad to furnish you prints. As the book "Photography on Collodion" is exhibit material I would not want to loan it, Neff also wrote "Melanotype Manual" of which we have no copy. The book was presented to the Museum in 1891.

Yours,


Asst. Curator Photography.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
LINCOLN BUILDING
SIXTY EAST FORTY-SECOND STREET



February seventeenth
1 9 3 3

Dr. Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry
The University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Dr. Taft:

The American Institute is the organization which awarded a medal to Peter Neff for the best malanotype in 1856.

The only records we have here are bound volumes of all of the awards made at all of our fairs from 1828 on. The following is a notation from our record of awards for 1856:

"Peter Neff, Jr. Cincinnati, Ohio, E. Anthony, (agent,) 308 Broadway, for the best melainotypes. Bronze medal."

The melainotype is not in our possession. I am sorry we can be of no further help.

Very truly yours,

Frances Flanagan
Clerk of the Institute

FF NMM

Robert Taft photography correspondence

707 East Ogden Avenue,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
February 21, 1933.,

The University of Kansas,
Dept. of Chemistry
Lawrence, Kansas.

Mr. Robert Taft-

Dear Sir:

Your letter of inquiry of Feb. 20 in regard to western photographs is at hand, and I will list those which might be of enough importance to be of interest to you.

These are all new copies of old prints and plates and were purchased with a view of using them for illustrating some of my magazine articles on frontier life in the west. They are good, clear, contact prints of high quality. The prices I quote are the same as I paid. All have neat printed titles except as noted.

1. Old locomotive, used as early as 1867 on Union Pacific; close-up view taken in 1929 at Hays, Kansas. Size $4\frac{1}{4}$ X $6\frac{1}{2}$ ***** Price \$.50
2. Portrait of Richard W. Clark, the original "Deadwood Dick," a stage driver and guard on the gold coach out of Deadwood, S. D. in the 70's. Titled in ink; size $4\frac{1}{4}$ X $6\frac{1}{2}$ ***** Price \$.50
3. Statue and grave of Rev. Henry Smith first preacher in the Black Hills, who was killed by Indians, Aug. 20, 1876. Size $4\frac{1}{4}$ X $6\frac{1}{2}$ ***** Price \$.50
4. Monument marking spot where Rev. Smith was killed while traveling from Deadwood to Crook City. Size $4\frac{1}{4}$ X $6\frac{1}{2}$ ***** Price \$.50
5. Postcard photos as follows -

Sitting Bull - full face portrait

Ox Train Freight Outfit, Ft. Hays, Kansas, no date. I know from experience that these photos are scarce (not very clear)

L.D. Bertillion holding pair of Texas longhorns of over 7ft. spread, from the cave where he discovered thousands of them. These are a relic of a range tragedy that occurred over one hundred and twenty years ago.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

(2)

A description of the historic circumstances surrounding these mementos of the open range, as published in a well known magazine, appears on the reverse side; a full account of which was published in the San Antonio Express some years ago. This photo will soon be by OUTDOOR LIFE in connection with one of my articles.

None of the postcards have printed titles, and will accept 10¢ each for them.

These are all that I wish to dispose of that you would be much interested in, or that could be called important historically. Most of the above are symbols of different phases of western development.

If you feel interested, I would be glad to hear from you.

Very Truly,

J. L. Beardsley
J.L. Beardsley

707 East Ogden Ave.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Robert Taft photography correspondence

Feb. 27, 1933

Professor E. H. Johnson
Kenyon College
Gambier, Ohio

Dear Professor Johnson:

This is a tardy acknowledgment of your letter of Feb. 15 and of the copy of the Smith portrait. Thank you very much for both.

I am sending the photograph of Prof. Smith to Dr. Howard Jones of Circleville, Ohio, who was a nephew of Smith and was quite intimate with him. I think possibly he can make a certain identity; in case he does, I will let you know. Can you give me a little more information concerning the portrait in the Kenyon College library. Is it a painting, photograph, ambrotype, or tintype, and of what size? I don't suppose there is any date on it which would indicate when it was made.

I have been able to obtain some information from the Dr. Jones referred to previously, but have received more through the Western Reserve Historical Society of Cleveland, which has some of Smith's letters, and also a manuscript of Neff's. The National Museum of Washington has also given me some information. Yesterday I received a copy of the tintype which Smith submitted with his patent in 1855.

I am not quite certain how my material will be published as yet. When I first started out I had planned to present it as a paper, but I have collected a considerable amount of information on other types of early photographs which may be of sufficient interest to publish in book form. In either case, it will be some time before publication takes place, but I will be glad to inform you of the final form and send you a copy if possible.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry

RT/w

Robert Taft photography correspondence

March 2, 1933

Dr. Howard Jones
Circleville
Ohio

Dear Dr. Jones:

Under separate cover we are returning the photograph of Professor Smith, which you lent me some time ago. We have copied it, and I am planning to use it when the history is published. I am also sending you a copy of another photograph upon which I wish your opinion. It was obtained from Kenyon College with the notation, "This is said to be a photograph of Professor H. L. Smith." Can you make a certain identity of the picture; i.e., do you think that it is a photograph of Professor Smith? You will notice the very large microscope in the picture. In one of your recent letters to me you told me that a microscope was presented to Professor Smith by the English (or French) Microscopical Society, and the microscope was now in your possession. Possibly the microscope in the picture is your microscope. When was the instrument presented to Smith, do you know? If the picture is of Professor Smith I should like to fix the approximate date when it was taken.

I recently received from Dr. A. J. Olmstead of the National Museum a photograph of the tintype submitted with Smith's application for his patent in 1856. It is a likeness of a small boy, perhaps eight years old. Do you think this could have been Professor's Smith's son?

It may also interest you to know that I have recently found that Professor Smith was one of the earliest experimenters on photography in this country. In Silliman's Journal for 1841 there is a letter on daguerreotypy written in 1840 by a Mr. Goode which refers to some experiments on the development of the image in a daguerreotype conducted by "Mr. H. L. Smith of Cleveland, Ohio."

If the copy of the supposed Smith portrait is of any interest to you, please keep it.

Thank you again for your courtesy in lending us the Smith photograph.

Yours very truly,

Robert Taft

RT/w

Robert Taft photography correspondence

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
LINCOLN BUILDING
SIXTY EAST FORTY-SECOND STREET



March fourth
1 9 3 3

Dr. Robert Taft
Associate Professor of Chemistry
The University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

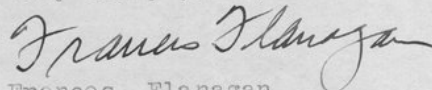
Dear Dr. Taft:

The prize list for The American Institute Fair of 1856 lists the classification of Daguerrotypes, Photographs and Ambrotypes, with twenty-one entries. This exhibit included photographs and photographic equipment, and four awards were given: a gold medal, a silver medal, bronze medals, and diplomas.

We find no mention of awards for melanotypes after 1856. In 1855 W. A. Tomlinson was awarded a silver medal for an ambrotype, mentioned as "a novelty in the art." In 1857 two awards were given for Hollotypes - a large silver medal to C. D. Fredricks, and a bronze medal to J. Gurney.

Our record books do not give detailed information, but we will be glad to send you any information we can find.

Very truly yours,



Frances Flanagan
Clerk of the Institute

FF:MM

Robert Taft photography correspondence

FREDERICK S. DELLENBAUGH
ONE WEST SIXTY SEVENTH STREET
NEW YORK

March 5th, 1933

My dear Prof. Taft;

The print of Hillers and the reproduction are both safely here. The reproduction is excellent showing that your photographic laboratory knows how.

I have ready to send you the one of Custer and the grizzly-the figures in it identified by Mrs Custer so there is no mistake-and one of the Mission Dolores in San Francisco-and one by Illingworth of Custer's expedition assembled on a plain. This is the Black Hills Exp.

I am also sending a photograph of me taken in San F. in March 1873. This is about the way I looked at the time of the Second Powell Exp. It seems to be the only one I have so please guard it specially. On p. 243 of the ROMANCE there is another portrait of me taken a year or two later.

I have many Beaman-Hillers-Fennemore prints, chiefly stereoscopic, so it will not be necessary for you to copy any half tones; unless I have lost some. I seldom lose anything but between the piles of stuff I have here unclassified and up at my country place, it is not always easy to find what I want. I have always had so many other interesting things to do than classifying that I neglected the classification so long that now it is a prodigious task. But I have two filing cabinets full more or less in order.

In New York one is short of room generally and so it is here as I don't want to encumber the whole place with my truck. In fact this is a duplex apartment and were you to see only the down stairs part you would say I had no books or MSS at all-but come up into my study!

In case you need some daguerreotypes or ambrotypes I have a number of good examples--and one of me about three years old (not for publication) that would split your sides without a second look.

I find one end of Split Mountain Canyon in a photo. here and will look further for the lower end. It may be that Beaman did not take that end. If you want it specially, I can, as perhaps I mentioned before, get my friend Captain Abbott to go there from his home near Jensen, and take it.

In both cases the strata are almost vertical as they come out of the water; then bending over.

Perhaps, after all, it was not you who wanted the prints of Split-Mountain!

The titles of your proposed books arouse great interest in me. There is no doubt that they will fill a ^{valuable} place and must be published. If you have no publisher in mind I would suggest the Yale Press, or the Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale, Los Angeles.

With regards,

Frederick S. Dellenbaugh.

*Hillers' son lives in Washington.
If you had another print of his
dad I would send it to him.*

Robert Taft photography correspondence

HOWARD JONES, M. D.
CIRCLEVILLE, O.

March, 6, 33.

Prof. Robert Taft,
Department of Chemistry,
The University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas.

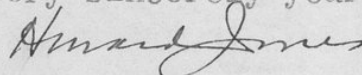
Dear Professor Taft:

Your letter of March 2nd. together with the small reprint and also the picture of Professor Smith which I had loaned to you are at hand. The small reproduction is undoubtedly that of Professor Smith as the beard, collar and cravat and side face correspond with an oil painting which I have of him about that date. I have sent it on to his daughter-in-law for further identification and also have made inquiry from her in regard to the boy in the tin-type.

I think you are safe in saying that Prof. Smith developed the daguerreotype in this country. My mother was married in 1846 and according to her he was working on photography many years before as I previously wrote you.

The microscope in the picture is not the one that I have referred too. It is possible that in some of the early "Who's Who in America" you might find some reference to his work in photography.

Very sincerely yours,



H.J./AMC.

Howard Jones, M.D.